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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine the perspectives of two-year college faculty and students regarding the teaching and learning of literacy. Specifically, the study examined participants' definitions, personal values, and experiences related to literacy instruction/acquisition. Data were gathered from interviews with 12 faculty members and 12 students in the English and college-prep reading and writing departments at a large, urban community college in Florida. Interview transcriptions were edited, coded, and summarized, and then thematic categorical analysis were conducted. Findings from the study included the following: (1) both students and faculty valued the practical and personal aspects of literacy, and used metaphors that suggested a view of literacy as a hierarchy of increasing complexity; (2) while students tended to emphasize matters of correctness and organizational clarity, faculty tended to emphasize the critical, social, and cultural aspects of literacy; and (3) for both students and faculty, the overriding influence of the mandatory College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) were the specific requirements imposed on all those involved in the teaching and learning of reading and composition. Among suggestions that emerged from the study were that state legislators end the CLAST requirement and that college administrators allow the English Department to determine its own assessment process. A literature review, detailed profiles of study participants, and a 275-item bibliography are included. (PAA)

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